

December 2009

THE FRUIT AND VEGGIE BUZZ

The Newsletter for the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program in Indiana



MERRY CHRISTMAS

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Tips for Fresh Produce Safety

Buying Tips

- Purchase produce that is not bruised or damaged.
- When selecting fresh-cut produce - such as a half a watermelon or bagged salad greens - choose items that are refrigerated or surrounded by ice.
- Bag fresh fruits and vegetables separately from meat, poultry and seafood products.

Storage Tips

- Store perishable fresh fruits and vegetables (like strawberries, lettuce, herbs, and mushrooms) in a clean refrigerator at a temperature of 40° F or below.
- Refrigerate all produce that is purchased pre-cut or peeled.

Preparation Tips

- Begin with clean hands. Wash your hands for 20 seconds with warm water and soap before and after preparing fresh produce.
- Cut away any damaged or bruised areas on fresh fruits and vegetables. Produce that looks rotten should be discarded.
- All produce should be thoroughly washed before eating. Wash fruits and vegetables under running water just before eating, cutting or cooking.
- Even if you plan to peel the produce before eating, it is still important to wash it first.
- Washing fruits and vegetables with soap or detergent or using commercial produce washes is not recommended.
- Scrub firm produce, such as melons and cucumbers, with a clean produce brush.
- Drying produce with a clean cloth towel or paper towel may further reduce bacteria that may be present.

Source: <http://www.foodsafety.gov/keep/types/fruits/tipsfreshprodsafety.html>



Nutrient Rich Foods Coalition



This website offers a variety of information based on nutrition guidelines from the USDA MyPyramid. It contains really great fact sheets that can be used in newsletters, handouts, health fairs, or lesson plans. It has a guide to living nutrient-rich which includes navigating the grocery store, nutrient rich shopping list, guide to nutrition labels, portion control basics, adding nutrients to meals, eating out, and fitting in fun foods. Needing recipes and menu ideas? Check out the link which contains nutrient rich recipes and meals by the numbers. You can search the recipes by selecting the meal course, total time, difficulty level, and entering a keyword. Nutrient Rich Foods Coalition identifies the six food groups and gives you guidance to make healthy choices for each food group. These six food group fact sheets can be used during class discussions, announcements, or in your school's newsletter. The Nutrient Rich Foods Coalition has partnerships with produce professionals such as California Kiwifruit and Florida Oranges. On their website, they have links to these partnership websites which contain great information on their products—fact sheets, lesson plans, and nutritional information.



<http://www.nutrientrichfoods.org/index.html>

USDA

Here are some websites from USDA that have easy to read handouts, marketing tools, facts, nutrition education, and farm to school initiatives that can be used in a variety of ways with your FFVP.

USDA is creating a 10 tip series which features different nutrition education with 10 tips on how to achieve nutritional goals. The "10 Tips" begins with cutting back on salt and sodium, followed by tips for setting good examples to be a healthy role model for children, tips for following a vegetarian diet, and tips for making more environmentally friendly food choices. Other tips will be added regularly, and can be downloaded at www.MyPyramid.gov.



USDA and Ad Council have teamed up with Walt Disney Studios Home Entertainment on a series of public service announcements. These public service announcements feature characters from Pinocchio to the Jungle Book. They include several radio announcements, television

announcements, posters, and banners that can be accessed at <http://www.adcouncil.org/default.aspx?id=475>.

USDA has introduced "Growing a Healthier You: Nutrition From the Farm to the Table". This new web page links garden and farm produce to the nutritional well-being of the public and the significance of locally grown fruits and vegetables. This web page, located at www.cnpp.usda.gov/KnowYourFarmer.htm, will promote national initiatives, such as National Nutrition Month and feature interesting facts about specific fruits, vegetables and other foods. It will also feature What's for Dinner (or Breakfast or Lunch); Your Garden, Your Produce, Your Menus; and From Garden to Plate, Safety Matters.



Small Step

The content of the *Small Step* website is divided into five key sections — Get the Facts, Eat Better, Get Active, Learn More, and Portion Control — providing a goldmine of healthful living tips. *Small Step* electronic resources include an online newsletter, tip-of-the-day "postcards," and an activity tracker, an interactive physical activity self-monitoring tool.

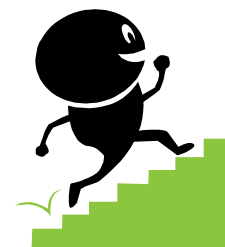
Small Step Kids <http://smallstep.gov/kids/flash/index.html> is the youth companion website directed at children and teachers. Kid-friendly fruit and vegetable nutrition, quizzes, games, activities, and web links are posted on the site. Additionally, educators can download the Small Step health and fitness curriculum targeted at children in second through fourth grade.

The adult and youth *Small Step* websites are available in both English and Spanish. Site users can sign up for

a free electronic newsletter describing updates on Small Step tips, recipes, and other features. Click the appropriate link below to access the Spanish or English website:

Spanish: http://www.smallstep.gov/esp_index.cfm

English: <http://www.smallstep.gov/>



Holiday Recipes

Need some great holiday recipes? Food and Health Communications has a variety of recipes available. You can select a variety of categories such as vegetable, fruit, or holiday, and you can use the search function to type in a keyword to search all the recipes. Nutritional information, diabetic exchanges, servings, and total preparation and cooking time will be provided with your recipe. Check out these recipes for the holidays!



<http://www.foodandhealth.com/recipes.php>

Blueberries



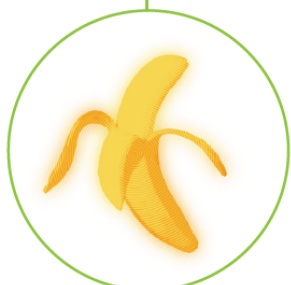
Want to know everything about blueberries? Check out the U.S.

Highbush Blueberry Council website. This website contains a variety of information from recipes, history, production, buying and handling, free resources (lesson plans and fact sheets), and nutrition. There are free classroom activity sheets and posters that teachers can download under the teachers and kids section. In the resource library under about the program, there are free print outs which are in English and Spanish.

<http://www.blueberrycouncil.org/about.php>

30 WAYS in 30 DAYS

to Stretch Your Fruit & Vegetable Budget



National Fruits & Veggies—More Matters® Month • September

- 1** Calculate an appropriate Healthy Food Budget for your family, based on USDA's Low-Cost Food Plan. This easy-to-use calculator, offered by Iowa State University Extension, helps to create a budget for what is a reasonable amount to spend to feed your family healthy meals. (www.extension.iastate.edu/foodsavings/fooddollar/).
- 2** Cook enough for several meals and freeze leftovers. Place enough food for 1-2 meals in each container.
- 3** Create a meal plan for the week that uses similar fruits and vegetables, prepared in different ways. Make the most out of the produce that you buy.
- 4** Buy fruits and vegetables in season at farmers' markets or at your local grocery store.
- 5** Grow your own vegetables. Invest a little in seeds, and get a lot of vegetables in return. Try indoor pots or greenhouse growing for the cooler months. Visit www.cdc.gov/Features/GrowingVegetables/ for more information.
- 6** Mix it yourself. 100% juice from frozen concentrate is often less expensive per serving than pre-bottled juice.
- 7** Minimize waste, by buying only the amounts your family will eat.
- 8** Learn basic food math. Taking the time to make a food budget before grocery trips can make food buying decisions easier. Simple food math can help you decide if the watermelon or the bunch of grapes is a better buy.
- 9** Enjoy the comforts of home more often. Eating at restaurants can increase the amount you spend on food. Include fruits and vegetables in quick, simple meals that you prepare at home. Visit http://recipefinder.nal.usda.gov/index.php?mode=pick_search&theme=2&cost_serving_num=&cost_recipe_num=&submit=Search for more information.
- 10** Be creative! To get the most out of your purchase, enjoy your fruits and vegetables in different ways. For example, you can use fruits for dessert. Try baking apples or poaching pears with some cinnamon. Visit <http://apps.nccd.cdc.gov/dnparecipe/RecipeSearch.aspx> and www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/?page_id=10 for more information.

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- 11** **Homemade soup** is a healthy and tasty way to use vegetables. Make a big batch and freeze leftovers in small lunch-size containers.
- 12** Look for **sales and deals** on fruits & vegetables at the grocery store or through coupons.
- 13** Cut your **fruits and vegetables at home**. Pre-cut produce can cost much more than whole fruits and vegetables.
- 14** **Don't shop hungry**. Eat a healthy snack, such as an apple, before going to the grocery store so that you stick to your budget and avoid spending money set aside for fruit and vegetables on less healthy temptations.
- 15** **Maximize your time and money**. Cut coupons for foods, such as fruits and vegetables, only on your grocery list.
- 16** **Canned fruits and vegetables** will last a long time and can be a healthy addition to a variety of meals. Choose canned vegetables that have no added salt and fruit that is canned in 100% fruit juice.
- 17** **Frozen fruit and vegetables** store well in the freezer until you're ready to add them to a meal.
- 18** **Pick your own at local farms**. Late summer and early fall is a great time to pick your own fruits and vegetables. This can be a fun and less expensive way to buy in bulk and freeze, can, or dry for later.
- 19** **Dried fruit** lasts for a long time, but can be expensive. Buy in bulk with friends and share the cost.
- 20** **Store-brands** can be a great budget choice for many forms of fruits and vegetables.
- 21** **WIC (Women, Infants, and Children) and Senior Farmers Market coupons** can be used by WIC participants and older adults to purchase locally-grown, delicious fruits and vegetables.
- 22** When trying new fruits and vegetables, buy in **small amounts**. Taste test before you change your grocery list.
- 23** **Keep it simple**. Buy dried beans, peas, and lentils in their raw or uncooked form instead of the processed and packaged versions which cost more.
- 24** **Avoid buying single servings**. Purchasing many small packages of produce is often more expensive than buying in larger amounts.
- 25** **Shop at discount grocery stores** for good deals on fruits and vegetables, especially canned items.
- 26** **Shop at large grocery stores** instead of small convenience stores when possible. There is more choice and the produce is often less expensive at larger stores.
- 27** To make many fresh fruits and vegetables last longer, store them in the refrigerator or freezer soon after getting home from your shopping trip. Many cookbooks offer specific freezing instructions.
- 28** **Clearly label your foods** in the freezer and refrigerator with the contents and date to stay within a safe time frame.
- 29** **Get creative with your leftover fruits and vegetables**. Make salsa from your tomatoes and smoothies from your fruits! Visit www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov to learn how.
- 30** **Buy frozen fruits and vegetables in large bags** to stretch your budget (e.g., green beans and blueberries). Avoid those with added sugar, salt, or sauce.

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